

Pre-service Special Education Teachers' Preparation for Inclusive Education in Bangladesh: An Action Research

Md. Saiful Malak

Assistant Professor, Institute of Education & Research, University of Dhaka

PhD Researcher, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Building-6, Clayton, VIC-3800, Australia

E-mail: saiful01327@yahoo.com mmal41@student.monash.edu

Abstract

This action research investigates the effectiveness of a supervised microteaching (simulation) program of a university for developing pre-service special education teachers' competencies. Explicitly this paper explores the challenges of the pre-service teachers to teach students with hearing impairment (HI) during their practicum. Five Pre-service teachers (including one with Deafness) enrolled in a teacher education program were taught and supervised during their simulation semester in accordance with the university prescribed program. Classroom teaching of the pre-service teachers was observed during simulation and practicum semesters based on Kilic's (2010) observation checklist. Further, the same participants were interviewed at the end of their practicum. The results revealed from the study indicate a gap between the nature of the supervised simulation program at the university and the characteristics of practicum at the real teaching situations. Pre-service teachers' performances, especially in the areas of 'communication' and 'classroom management' declined significantly in practicum compared to simulation. Lack of experiential learning opportunities in supervised simulation is identified as the prime reason which hindered pre-service teachers from improving their inclusive teaching skills. Implications are discussed regarding pre-service teachers' preparedness for better inclusive practices in regular classrooms.

Keywords: Inclusive education, simulation, practicum, teacher, and hearing impairment.

1. Introduction and Background

As a part of the university teaching, my responsibility is to conduct a supervised simulation semester for the students who are at their 6th semester. Students studying in the area of HI in a 4-year Bachelor of Special Education (SpeEd) program of the Department of Special Education undergo the simulation semester under my supervision. I teach and supervise the pre-service teachers during the simulation semester in accordance with the format of the university. Based on the prescribed design of the university, the simulation semester is divided into three parts including lecture session (four weeks), guided micro-teaching (six weeks) and evaluation of micro-teaching (six weeks).

In lecture session, based on the university format, I usually describe to the students what happens in a microteaching situation and how they can better prepare themselves for practicum. Guided microteaching involves students to demonstrate their teaching in which I support them to improve their skills. I prepare a schedule based on what a student is asked to demonstrate at least 2 classes in a week. In this part, I observe their demonstration classes and provide them with useful feedback verbally and in written form. In the last part of the simulation, I assess how the teacher candidates perform in micro-teaching. I usually observe six classes of every pre-service teacher and mark them individually based on their performance in five specific teaching competencies such as 'subject area', 'lesson planning', 'teaching process', 'communication' and 'classroom management'. The purpose of the simulation semester is to prepare the pre-service teachers for teaching students with HI in a real situation in the following semester called practicum.

I conducted this action research on five pre-service teachers who chose HI as a major area of their study. There were three female pre-service teachers; 'Brishti', 'Popy' and 'Farzana', and 2 male pre-service teachers; 'Tarek' and 'Habib'. It is important to note that Popy was a Deaf pre-service teacher whose Deafness was congenital and the threshold of her hearing was 75 decibel, which is considered as severe level Deafness (Wallhagen, Petengill & Whiteside, 2006, p. 42). She was using a hearing aid without which she could not hear properly. However, at a situation like conversation, she had the ability to follow other people's lip-patterns and respond to them properly. Her speech was a little bit interrupted but she was able to communicate verbally by using short sentences.

Since I am specialized in HI, I knew the basic requirements of Popy during the simulation semester but it was challenging for me to prepare her. All five pre-service teachers were hard working and performed really well in

their simulation semester where they were taught how to conduct classes for students with HI in both inclusive and special settings. They were prepared how to make and use teaching aids for students with HI. In addition, they were taught how to design lessons for inclusive classrooms and what approaches would be needed to apply for teaching students with HI in regular classrooms. I was quite satisfied with the teaching competencies they demonstrated in their simulation semester. I expected them to reflect those teaching skills in their practicum.

The particular investigation was important to me for two special purposes. First, in my five years of university teaching career, this was the first time when a Deaf pre-service teacher was participating in practicum. I faced numerous challenges during the simulation semester to prepare her for the practicum semester. Therefore, I was eager to see how she would perform in real teaching environment. Second, this was the first group of pre-service teachers who were prepared for teaching students with HI in regular classrooms (inclusive setting) rather than special classrooms only. Since its establishment in 1990s, the Department of Special Education has been developing special teachers for the purpose of serving students with special educational needs (SEN) in special schools. Provisionally special schools were responsible for educating students with SEN in Bangladesh for last two decades. However, the education policies of Bangladesh recently underpins mainstreaming for students with SEN and inclusive education has been suggested as a strategy for ensuring education for all children (Das, 2011). As such, teacher education institutes nowadays appear to focus more on inclusive education in preparing pre-service teachers. Therefore, I was keen to see whether the strategies that I used for and the competencies that were achieved by the particular pre-service teachers in their simulation would enable them to effectively teach students with HI in inclusive classrooms.

1.1 What is meant by Inclusive Education?

Inclusive education refers to such an approach in which students with SEN attend in general school program academically cent percent of the school day (Idol, 1997). Foreman (2005) defines inclusive education as “the philosophy that schools should, without question, provide for the needs of all children in their communities, whatever the level of their ability or disability” (p. 12). Inclusive education is broadly described as the alteration of the educational environment so that all children can participate effectively, and all children are valued and provided with equal opportunities at school (Thomas, 1997). Thomazet (2009) offered several key elements to explain inclusive pedagogy, such as (i) all children have a right to education, (ii) all children can learn and they can learn from each other, (iii) all children are different, therefore the learning situation must be adapted to their needs, (iv) a child-centered pedagogy of benefit to all students, and (v) learning is enhanced through co-operation among teachers, children themselves, parents and the community.

The concept and philosophy of inclusive education gained significant international value when the United Nations (UN) promoted the idea of ‘Education for All’ at a conference in Thailand in 1990 (UNESCO, 1990). A challenge was imposed to all nations, schools and educators in 1994 when a policy statement was made to implement inclusivity for students with diverse learning needs in all regular education classrooms. Later, Dakar Framework-2000 and UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities-2006 contributed to the acceleration of inclusive education as unique agenda to be implemented globally (Kabir, 2008).

Inclusive education often requires several changes in pedagogy, curriculum and school structure for accommodating diverse students (Slee, 2012). This means that in an inclusive school, curriculum, teaching methods and assessment procedures need to be adjusted or differentiated. For example, if there is a student with HI enrolled in a regular classroom with other students, a teacher needs to adapt his/her instructional approaches, teaching aids, sitting arrangement and assessment technique for ensuring that every student is accommodated in the classroom.

Teachers’ knowledge and skills are recognized as the key elements for making inclusive education happen in regular classrooms (Savolainen, Engelbrecht, Nel & Malinen, 2012). Many education researchers argue that an effective teacher education program is the best means to sharpen teachers’ skills regarding changes occurred in the contemporary pedagogy (Savolainen et al., 2012). However, it is also evident that teacher education programs sometimes fail to motivate pre-service teachers towards teaching students with SEN in regular classrooms (e.g., see Li, Oneonta & Ji, 2010). Therefore, more and more action research is needed to explore the challenges faced by teacher education institutes towards preparing pre-service teachers in inclusive pedagogy.

2. Methodology

Participants of the study were the pre-service teachers (N-5) enrolled in a 4 year Bachelor of Education (Spe.Ed.) program at a public university in Bangladesh. For practicum purpose all five participants were placed in one school where students with HI studied from Grade one to twelve. The school had both special and inclusive classrooms for students with HI.

I used a class observation checklist for evaluating pre-service teachers’ performances. Based on the prescribed

evaluation form of the respective university, I modified the Teacher Candidates' Teaching Competency Checklist (see Appendix) developed by Kilic (2010) for classroom observation. Six classes (3 special and 3 inclusive) taught by every participant were observed during practicum. It should be noted that I used the same checklist during simulation and observed same number of classes. Simulation classes were formed by these five pre-service teachers. While one pre-service teacher taught in simulation, four other pretended to be students of both special and inclusive classes.

Further, an unstructured one-on-one interview was conducted with each of the participant at the end of their practicum semester. I valued the choices of the participants regarding time and venue in conducting interviews. Local language (Bangla) was used in interviews which were audio recorded with the permission of the participants.

Data obtained from classroom observation were analyzed in descriptive manner. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed in Bangla and then translated to English. I used Back Translation (Brislin, 1970) process to transform (from Bangla to English) the interview codes which I used in the analysis. Two colleagues of mine volunteered me in the translation process. First I and one of my colleagues did the translation (from Bangla to English) separately. Then we crosschecked and revised the English codes. Finally, together with the other colleague, I compared the revised English version with the original Bangla version again. Considering the suggestions of my second colleague, I finalized the English version and used in this analysis.

3. Results

Each participant's data is analyzed and presented separately. Average scores of the pre-service teachers' teaching behaviours in both simulation and practicum are presented in tables. Further, data gained from interview is added to the analysis of class observation. A summary of the main findings is also presented at the end of this section.

3.1 Participant-1: Brishti

Table-1 shows how Brishti performed in special and inclusive class teaching in both simulation and practicum. She scored higher in inclusive classes than special classes during her simulation. However, surprising in practicum, her scores decreased significantly in inclusive class teaching compared to special classes.

Brishti's performance declined in almost all teaching competencies in practicum. Analyzing her scores based on the teaching behaviours set for observation, it could be argued that she was not prepared properly in the areas of 'classroom management' and 'communication' during the university simulation. Her performance in these two specific areas suggests that she desperately needed additional training. Although her overall performance in practicum was better in special classes than inclusive classes, it seems to me that she was struggling to maintain the pace of communication with the students with HI even in special classes. Further, she appeared to be too busy to grab the attention of the students with HI in inclusive classes. As a result, she failed to engage majority of the regular students in lessons activities.

Table 1: Brishti's scores in simulation and practicum

Areas of Teaching Competencies	Marks Distribution	Simulation Scores		Practicum Scores	
		Special	Inclusive	Special	Inclusive
Subject area	20	15	16	14	14
Planning	20	14	15	14	14
Teaching Process	20	15	17	16	15
Communication	20	15	16	10	8
Classroom Management	20	16	17	11	8
Total	100	75	81	65	59

Several disappointments were expressed by Brishti regarding practicum and simulation. Analyzing her interview, it seems to me that in the university simulation; she did not get a clear understanding of inclusive classrooms. Further, even though she did a number of units on HI at the university, her knowledge of students with HI was not clearer. She said,

Hearing impaired kids in this school are not like my friend, Popy. These kids are not fluent in speaking. I don't understand their speech fully. First week was horrible because the kids were asking something but I was unable to get what they asked for...eventually, I lost control ... the classroom became noisy. I think they should be developed their speech first.

For Brishti, it was not really like the kind classroom what she thought it would be during her simulation. She anticipated that students with HI would be able communicate verbally as her classmate (Popy) did. As such, her imagination about inclusive classroom for students with HI was fully different from what she experienced in practicum. She described,

Teaching in inclusive classes is just beyond by ability...they are two different kinds of kids and the needs of regular and hearing impaired kids are really different. I feel like I am teaching in two different classes at once.

Even though the purpose of the university simulation was to make the pre-service teachers confident in teaching in inclusive classrooms, Brishti's feelings about inclusive classrooms was not positive. It seems like she still believed that students with HI should be teaching in special classes rather than regular classrooms.

One of the reasons for Brishti's negative attitudes towards inclusive education for students with HI could be identified as lack of experiential learning opportunities during the simulation semester. She said, "I am unlucky because I could not see these students before". She suggested that during the simulation semester students should be given the opportunity to visit this school.

3.2 Participant-2: Farzana

Farzana's scores (Table-2) also indicates that she was uncomfortable with her teaching in both special and inclusive classes in practicum. She appeared to be performing better than Brishti but still it was poor compared to what she performed in simulation. Her scores in 'communication' and 'classroom management' show that she seriously needed more preparation for teaching students with HI in inclusive classes. Her teaching behaviours regarding subject area and planning were good. Her competencies regarding 'teaching process' and 'classroom management' appeared better in special classes than inclusive classes. Similarly, although it was poor, her teaching behaviours regarding 'communication' were observed better in special classes compared to those with inclusive classes.

Table 2: Farzana's scores in simulation and practicum

Areas of Teaching Competencies	Marks Distribution	Simulation Scores		Practicum Scores	
		Special	Inclusive	Special	Inclusive
Subject area	20	17	18	17	17
Planning	20	16	17	17	16
Teaching Process	20	17	17	16	16
Communication	20	15	16	11	10
Classroom Management	20	16	17	12	9
Total	100	81	85	73	68

Preparation for both special and inclusive classroom teaching in simulation was a kind of confusion to Farzana. She said, "Sometimes I mismatched special and inclusive teaching". As a supervisor, I noticed that she was overlapping inclusive teaching behaviours in special classes during simulation before I started marking her performance. She expressed her feelings in the following way:

I think practicum should be done in two semesters. One semester in special school and other is in inclusive school. Hearing impairment children are actually very challenging...I did not know much about them before...you can't compare practicum with simulation. Simulation is much easier... I've got experience about them (HI)...now [I] need to sharpen my skills...

Farzana's expression also indicates that the university simulation should arrange some experiential learning opportunities. It is also clear that she failed to comprehend an actual class with students with HI during her simulation. However, it seems to me that Farzana had positive attitudes towards inclusive education because she really wanted to be skilled in teaching students with HI.

3.3 Participant-3: Popy

As I mentioned earlier that Popy had some limitations in oral communication due to her Deafness. It was observed in simulation that her performance relating to the teaching behaviours of all five areas in both special and inclusive classes were almost similar (Table 3). However, it is noticeable that her average score increased significantly in special classes during practicum in comparison with her scores of simulation. I observed that she was performing exceptionally well in special classes during practicum. Her teaching behaviours relating 'communication' and 'classroom management' were outstanding with the students with hearing impairment in

special setting.

In contrast, I observed that in inclusive classes she was trying hard to manage the classrooms but the limitation in her oral communication was impeding her from building the rapport with the regular students. As a result in all three classes that I observed in inclusive setting, she failed to maintain the flow of effective learning environment that was required in an inclusive classroom.

It was good to see that Popy was quite comfortable in the behaviours relevant to teaching process in inclusive classrooms. However, I could realize that the way she was communicating with the regular students in inclusive classrooms was not suitable for her to manage the classroom for chaos. For instance, rather than stressing on oral communication, she could have designed her lessons more activity based.

The pleasure and disappointments regarding the students she taught in practicum were expressed by Popy while I interviewed her. Her feelings clearly indicate that she was confident in teaching students with HI in special classrooms.

Table 3: Popy's scores in simulation and practicum

Areas of Teaching Competencies	Marks Distribution	Simulation Scores		Practicum Scores	
		Special	Inclusive	Special	Inclusive
Subject area	20	14	13	14	13
Planning	20	14	14	14	14
Teaching Process	20	13	14	16	15
Communication	20	14	14	16	10
Classroom Management	20	14	14	17	9
Total	100	69	69	77	61

However, her frustration regarding inclusive classrooms provides evidence that she was not accepted by the regular students. She described,

I love deaf kids. I understand them. They understand me. I know common gestures they use....Special [class] is good. Inclusive [class] is tough. Normal kids [do] not like me. They laugh when I talk to deaf kids. I don't know why. My university friends like me but they (regular students) [do] not...

It is important to note that being a Deaf teacher Popy might have some hesitations to teach in regular classes. Continuous practice and proper exposure of their works support Deaf people to be confident by reducing hesitation (Stinson & Antia, 1999). Since Popy did not have any experience of teaching regular students, she might not have learnt how to straighten interaction with regular students in inclusive classrooms.

3.4 Participant-4: Tarek

The performance of Tarek in practicum surprised me. While his simulation scores in both special and inclusive education were above 80, he scored below 70 in both special and inclusive classrooms (Table 4). Consistent with other pre-service teachers, Tarek's practicum performance was also very poor in 'communication' and 'classroom management'. Compared to the simulation scores in inclusive classes, his practicum scores indicate that he would surely need more intensive training in 'teaching process', 'communication' and 'classroom management'.

Table 4: Tarek's scores in simulation and practicum

Areas of Teaching Competencies	Marks Distribution	Simulation Scores		Practicum Scores	
		Special	Inclusive	Special	Inclusive
Subject area	20	18	18	17	17
Planning	20	17	18	15	15
Teaching Process	20	17	17	15	14
Communication	20	16	17	10	8
Classroom Management	20	16	16	11	9
Total	100	84	86	68	63

Many of the strategies taught in simulation were not effective for Tarek in practicum. Lack of understanding about students with HI and large size class might hinder himself from showing positive attitudes towards inclusive education. Generally, students with HI do not get hyper unless there is a big gap created between the interaction of students and teacher. The expression of Tarek indicates that he might have failed to develop the bond with his students in special classes. His frustration was expressed as follows:

Practicum is so different from simulation...Hearing impaired kids are so hyper...I get really upset when teaching them in inclusive classes. Truly speaking, it is difficult to manage the whole classroom with 50 students including 5 hearing impaired. I applied so many strategies I learnt in simulation but several of them didn't work.

Tarek's expression further indicates that he could have good theoretical knowledge about inclusive education but he feels challenge to put this knowledge in to practice. His statement also suggests that he was confident in his teaching in simulation but not in practicum. Lack of confidence in inclusive teaching might have made himself avoidant of regular schooling of students with HI. He informed,

I can plan my lesson nicely but at some point I feel I lost it. I can prepare some good teaching aids for inclusive class but when I start using them I don't feel comfortable as I did in simulation... I think the way of learning of regular kids and hearing impaired is totally different. I really don't know how inclusive education is going to be effective for them.

3.5 Participant-5: Habib

Like his other peers, Habib's teaching performance in 'communication' and 'classroom management' areas was also observed poor in practicum (Table 5). In addition, his performance decreased in subject area in inclusive classes during practicum compared to simulation. His overall scores in practicum suggest that he requires more training especially in 'communication' and 'classroom management' if he wants to teach students with HI in regular classrooms.

Table 5: Habib's scores in simulation and practicum

Areas of Teaching Competencies	Marks Distribution	Simulation Scores		Practicum Scores	
		Special	Inclusive	Special	Inclusive
Subject area	20	15	16	15	14
Planning	20	16	16	16	15
Teaching Process	20	14	15	15	15
Communication	20	15	15	12	10
Classroom Management	20	15	15	10	10
Total	100	75	77	68	64

Habib thought that it could be the students with HI who are unable to participate in academic activities with their regular peers. The following statement indicates that students with HI requires intensive attention of teacher thereby they should not be taught in regular classrooms. However, his expression clearly confirms that he failed to grab the skills of communication for inclusive classrooms, because effective inclusive teaching skills allow teacher to engage all diverse students in academic activities. He expressed,

I wonder I could teach them (HI) in regular (inclusive) classes. I've learnt about their characteristics and classroom behaviour but practically these kids are more than that. They need huge attention...Communication is the main problem in regular classes because when I talk to the normal kids they (HI) don't understand ...I've to repeat again and again.

The following expression further indicates that Habib always like to treat the students with HI differently from regular students. As a result, he might have tried to use different teaching strategies for two different groups of students and clearly missed the technique through he could integrate the students with HI with their regular peers. He disclosed,

Honestly speaking special classes are much easier. At least you can manage them (HI) in special classes. Often I found myself not being able manage inclusive classes because whenever I was attending them (HI), the normal kids became noisy and unmanageable.

With an exception of Popy, all four pre-service teachers' performances declined in practicum compared to university simulation. Pre-service teachers performed better in inclusive classes than special classes in simulation whereas their scores in practicum provide an opposite finding. In practicum, all four participants' performances in inclusive classes were worse than that of special classes. It is, however, important to note that Popy's average score remained same in practicum and even though her performance decreased in inclusive classes, she was the only participant whose score in special classes increased in practicum.

Table 6: Summary of pre-service teachers' scores in simulation and practicum

Participants	Simulation Scores			Practicum Scores		
	Special	Inclusive	Average	Special	Inclusive	Average
Brishti	75	81	78	65	59	62
Farzana	81	85	83	73	68	70.5
Popy*	69	69	69	77	61	69
Tarek	84	86	85	68	63	65.5
Habib	75	77	76	68	64	66

* Deaf participant

Findings from the interview provide a common understanding that the pre-service teachers did not feel confident in teaching students with HI in regular classrooms. Therefore, their attitude towards inclusive education was negative. One of the common reasons emerged from the expressions of all the pre-service teachers for their inability in inclusive teaching competencies is that they did not have access to experiential learning opportunities during simulation. Further, the way used to prepare them during simulation was found less effective for them to teach in inclusive classroom in practicum. Nevertheless, majority of them including the Deaf pre-service teachers generally feel that they would be able to teach students with HI in special classrooms rather than inclusive classroom.

4. Discussion

Findings revealed from this study indicate that supervised simulation has been slightly effective for pre-service teachers in three teaching competencies including 'subject area', 'lesson planning' and 'teaching process' because the scores of the participants did not declined a lot in practicum. However, in the areas of 'communication' and 'classroom management', the university simulation has been completely unsuccessful in developing pre-service teachers' teaching competencies for actual classrooms. It should be noted that due to the lack of skills in 'communication' and 'classroom management', the overall teaching-learning environment constructed by pre-service teachers' in inclusive classes has become unsuccessful. As a result, they have developed negative attitudes towards inclusive education. Therefore, the results of this study clearly indicate that the way the university designed the simulation semester was ineffective for the pre-service teachers in promoting their skills for teaching students with HI in regular classrooms.

The findings of the study contradict with several studies which were carried out in pre-service teachers' training perspective. For example, the research of Orlova (2009), Ghafoor, Kiani, Kayani and Kayani (2012), and Mergler and Tangen (2010) found that microteaching had impacted on pre-service teachers significantly to develop their teaching competencies. More specifically, research that explores special education teachers' preparation towards inclusive education suggests that special education teacher candidates consistently developed more positive attitudes towards and efficacy for teaching students with SEN in regular schools during pre-service training (e.g., see Avrammidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000; Brownell, Ross, Colon & McCallum, 2005; Buell, Hallam, Gamel-McCormic & Scheer, 1999; Minke, Bear, Deemer & Griffin, 1996 and Nougaret, Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2005).

Based on the university format, at the very beginning of the simulation semester, in lecture session, I particularly focused on the skills which they needed to be competent in. I did not cover much the learning behaviours of students with HI, because I thought that they would have learnt those before simulation semester through two teaching HI courses. I did not realize that they should be visited some students with HI during simulation. Further, as per the provision of the university, students could go to schools only in practicum semester. However, to ensure better preparedness of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education, I think time is right to rethink about the traditional nature of university simulation because the findings of this study are really compelling.

Being Deaf, surely Popy had better understanding of the students with HI. Her performance indicates that pre-service teachers should have practical experience regarding students with HI before undergoing practicum.

Finding from interviews also fully support that pre-service teachers had lack of understanding about students with HI and expressed their dissatisfaction for not having the opportunity of gaining experience about them prior to practicum.

Pre-service teachers' performance in 'communication' and 'classroom management' competencies declined significantly in practicum in comparison to simulation. One of the reasons for this finding could possibly be explained that the five pre-service teachers pretended as students with HI during simulation. Since the pre-service teachers (except Popy) themselves were not clear about the characteristics of students with HI, they might not have been able to pretend properly as students with HI. Further, the four pre-service teachers might have thought that students with HI would be as like as Popy. However, it is important to mention that Popy is mature girl who had gained significant development in speech and literacy. Therefore, Popy cannot be assumed as representing a typical student with HI. As such, the misconception regarding the characteristics and learning behaviours of students with HI might have hindered them from obtaining the appropriate skills.

Pre-service teachers performed better in inclusive classes than special classes during simulation. However, in practicum they scores significantly declined in inclusive classes compared to the scores of special classes. One of the reasons revealed from interviews for this finding is that they considered students with HI and regular students as two different groups. Further, in their simulation they found Popy as a student with HI who might not be ever considered to be belonging in a different group by the pre-service teachers. Moreover, since the university used to prepare special teachers during last two decades, the curriculum might still be containing significant components on special education rather than inclusion.

5. Conclusion

The present study is a small initiative for exploring the challenges of pre-service teachers to perform in practicum for students with HI. Findings of the study suggest that the approaches used in the simulation semester in order to prepare pre-service teachers for practicum is ineffective for inclusive education. Therefore, based on the findings, the study recommends that in simulation semester, pre-service teachers should be given the opportunity of at least three weeks placement in the school where they would undertake their practicum. The duration of lecture session could be reduced to one week from four weeks. Instead of sitting in lecture sessions, the pre-service teachers should be placed in school for the remaining three weeks during the simulation semester. During this period their responsibilities should be gaining experience about students with HI in both special and inclusive settings through observing classes taught by the assigned teachers of the school. Nevertheless, the study also suggests that Deaf pre-service teacher's preparation should be given more attention during simulation. It is important to ensure that the supervisor is well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the pre-service teacher if he/she has Deafness, a semester prior to the simulation so that the supervisor can design the simulation effectively for all pre-service teachers.

Results of the present study will be useful to teacher education institutes for adapting simulation program in order to effectively prepare teacher candidates towards teaching students with SEN in regular classrooms. More studies based on action research approach could be undertaken on the other groups of pre-service teachers whose major areas of studies are visual impairment and intellectual impairment.

References

- Avramidis, E., Bayliss, P., & Burden, R. (2000). Student teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the ordinary school. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16 (3), 277-293.
- Brislin, R. W. (1970). Back-translation for cross-cultural research. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 1(3), 185-216.
- Brownell, M. T., Ross, D. D., Colon, E.P., & McCallum, C.L. (2005). Critical Features of Special Education Teacher Preparation: A Comparison with General Teacher Preparation. *The Journal of Special Education*, 38(4), 242-252.
- Buell, M. J., Hallam, R., Gamel-McCormick, M., & Scheer, S. (1999). A Survey of General and Special Education Teachers' Perceptions and In-service Needs Concerning Inclusion. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 46(2), 143-156.
- Das, A. (2011). Inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream primary education of Bangladesh. *Journal of International Development and Cooperation*, 17(2), 1-10.
- Foreman, P. (2005). *Inclusion in Action*. Melbourne: Nelson Australia.
- Ghafoor, A., Kiani, A., Kayani, S., & Kayani, S. (2012). An exploratory study of microteaching as an effective

- technology. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(4), 224-238.
- Idol, L. (1997). *Creating collaborative and inclusive schools*. Austin, TX: PRO-ED.
- Kabir, M. (2008). *United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and optional protocol for Bangladesh*. Dhaka : Action Aid Bangladesh.
- Kilic, A. (2010). Learner-centred micro teaching in teacher education. *International Journal of Instruction*, 3 (1), 77-100.
- Li, D., Oneonta, S., & Ji, H. (2010). Teaching students with disabilities in regular education classes: Perceptions of pre-service teachers from China and United States. *Educational Research and Development*, 13 (1), 62-69.
- Mergler, A. G., & Tangen, D. (2010). Using microteaching to enhance teacher efficacy in pre-service teachers. *Teaching Education*, 21 (2), 199-210.
- Nougaret, A. A., Scruggs, T. E., & Mastropieri, M. A. (2005). Does Teacher Education Produce Better Special Education Teachers? *Exceptional Children*, 71(3), 217-229.
- Orlova, N. (2009). Video recording as a stimulus for reflection in pre-service EFL teacher training. *English Teaching Forum*, 2, 30-35
- Savolainen, H., Engelbrecht, P., Nel, M., & Malinen, P. (2012). Understanding attitudes and self-efficacy in inclusive education: implication for pre-service and in-service teacher education. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 27 (1), 51-68
- Slee, R. (2012). How do we make inclusive education happen when exclusion is a political predisposition? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1-13. DOI:10.1080/13603116.2011.602534 Retrieved (21 March, 2012) from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2011.602534>
- Stinson, M., & Antia, S. D. (1999). Considerations in educating Deaf and hard-of-hearing students in inclusive settings. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 4 (3), 163-175.
- Thomas, G. (2007). Inclusive school for an inclusive society. *British Journal of Special Education*, 24 (3), 103-107.
- Thomazet, S. (2009). From integration to inclusive education: does changing the terms improve practice? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 13 (6), 553-563.
- UNESCO. (1990). *World declaration on education for all and framework for action to meet basic learning needs*. Paris: UNESCO Publications.
- Wallhagen, M. I., Petengill, E., & Whiteside, M. (2006). Sensory impairment in older adults: Part 1: Hearing loss. *American Journal of Nursing*, 106 (10), 40-48.

Author's Biography: Saiful Malak teaches courses relating to teacher education, special education, inclusion and applied psychology at the Institute of Education and Research (IER), University of Dhaka as Assistant Professor. His qualifications include B.Ed (Honors) & M.Ed in Special-Education (University of Dhaka), M.Ed with concentration to Inclusive Education (Griffith University, Australia). Currently he is undergoing PhD studies in the Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia. His PhD research focuses on teachers' attitudes, beliefs and intention regarding elementary students with challenging behaviors. His research interests include both inclusive and special education issues; student behaviour, behaviour problem, teachers' attitudes, beliefs & efficacy, pre-service & in-service teachers' preparedness/ professional development, hearing impairment, and disability studies. He is experienced in publishing articles in both national (Bangladesh) and international journals.

Appendix: Teacher Candidates' Teaching Competencies

Teaching behaviors	Marks distributed	Marks obtained
Subject area		
Creating motivation to lesson	4	
Locating the necessary and adequate resources	4	
Using main principles and concepts in the subject area	4	
Relating the subject area to real life	4	
Preparation, selection and use of appropriate teaching materials	4	
Planning		
Execution of lesson according to the aimed behaviour	4	
Presenting lesson systematically	4	
Expressing the goals clearly to all students	4	
Organising the learning environment to fit the goals	4	
Arranging special strategy to deliver lesson for getting everyone engaged	4	
Teaching process		
Relating lesson to the earlier	4	
Using various teaching approaches and techniques appropriately to ensure that all students are engaged	4	
Using activities that ensure all students' active participation	4	
Evaluating students' product appropriately	4	
Giving appropriate feedback on students activities	4	
Communication		
Using oral and body language effectively	4	
Establishing effective communication with all students	4	
Listening to students sympathetically/with patience	4	
Providing clear explanation and directions	4	
Building rapport by using eye contact	4	
Classroom management		
Reorganizing sitting arrangement when necessary	4	
Grabbing attention and motivating all students	4	
Giving appropriate transition to lesson	4	
Using appropriate reinforcement to encourage students	4	
Ending lesson appropriately	4	